

I congratulate him today on 35 years of service in the Senate to his State and to his country.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAST-TRACK LEGISLATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I agree with President Clinton's goal of creating economic growth through more export opportunities, but I must vote against this legislation to renew fast-track authority because it fails to protect our workers and our environment.

I understand that exports are a key ingredient of Vermont's economic growth. As a small State, we must rely on selling our products beyond the Green Mountains. Exports give Vermonters the opportunity to create good jobs right here in Vermont through rising trade. For instance, Cabot Creamery recently made headlines by selling its Vermont-made cheddar cheese in London, England.

Vermonters are reaping the benefits of more open markets around the world, where we can sell our high quality goods. Since 1992, Vermont exports are up 29 percent, with 70,000 Vermonters now working in export-related jobs. On a per capita basis, Vermont is the largest exporter of goods among the 50 States. We just need to look at the Vermont expansion of Husky, a Canadian company with European plants, to understand the importance of trade in the world economy.

I will continue to work with Vermonters to encourage exporting of our goods and services as a path for prosperity for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren.

But trade is about more than economic statistics, it is a moral issue as well. Just as the fight to ban landmines worldwide is the right thing to do, free trade must also be fair. Fair trade expands exporting opportunities. But just as importantly, fair trade safeguards our standard of living by supporting our absolute right to a clean environment and sound labor practices.

In earlier times workers' rights and environmental concerns were mostly separated from trade considerations, but that has begun to change. In today's global economy, the interaction between trade and the rights of workers and environmental protections cannot be ignored. One of the reasons I voted for the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] was because it contained side agreements on labor and environmental issues—the first trade agreement to ever link these issues together.

But, unfortunately, this fast-track authority bill moves away from the critical link between trade and labor and the environment that we fought so hard to forge in NAFTA. Under the terms of this bill, even the modest labor and environmental side agreements under NAFTA would be excluded from fast-track consideration. That is unacceptable.

Like the NAFTA debate, the rhetoric on both sides of this debate is overblown. I do not believe the lack of fast-track authority will cripple future trade negotiations. Since fast-track authority lapsed in 1994, the administration has successfully negotiated hundreds of trade pacts with countries around the world. As the world's only superpower with a market of more than 250 million consumers, the United States will continue to command the economic power to open markets and expand export opportunities with or without the President having fast-track authority.

I do not believe the Congress should lightly hand over its right to amend, even in the consideration of trade agreements. In no other area of legislation does Congress give up its constitutional right to offer amendments. If the Congress has no more recourse on these issues than to vote trade agreements up or down, the key question to ask is: Does this bill give the President the authority to negotiate trade agreements that protect the rights of all our citizens? It does not.

I had hoped that when fast-track legislation reached the Senate floor it would have allowed for expanding export opportunities while protecting our workers and our environment. This bill fails to deliver those necessary protections. As a result, I will vote against it.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JERRY B. HEDRICK

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Jerry Hedrick as he retires from 22 years of service to Hoechst Marion Roussel, the largest pharmaceutical company in the State of Missouri. Jerry is known for his expertise in the fields of health care and public policy, and has been a mentor to many persons involved in those fields.

Jerry began his career in 1975 with the pharmaceutical industry as a consultant when he joined Marion Laboratories, a predecessor company to Marion Merrell Dow Inc. and Hoechst Marion Roussel. Through Jerry's outstanding talents and dedication he has distinguished himself in the pharmaceutical industry as the vice president of government affairs for Hoechst Marion Roussel since August 1995.

Upon graduation from college, Jerry worked as a teacher, and he continues to work with young people through his volunteering with the Heart of America Council of the Boy Scouts of America and the Dream Factory, an organization dedicated to granting the wishes of very ill children. I commend Jerry

for the outstanding service he provides to his community. As our Nation looks increasingly to individuals to become more active in the work of the community, Jerry's commitment provides an example for others to follow.

Jerry also generously gives his time to the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the Midwest Bioethics Center where he is one of the founding trustees, the Advisory Council at Emporia State University, and the American Quarter Horse Association as the Kansas State director.

I have had the opportunity to work with Jerry on several occasions and have always considered him to be a person of knowledge and insight. His dedication to the advancement of health care in America is truly admirable.

I urge the Senate to join me in bidding Jerry Hedrick a fond farewell, and wishing him, his wife, Bev, and his daughter, Ginger, the very best as they move on to face new challenges, opportunities, and rewards.

THE "SAVER" BILL

Mr. BREAU. Mr. President, as an original cosponsor along with Senator GRASSLEY, I am pleased to strongly support the SAVER bill, Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act of 1997. This measure is a bi-partisan effort on the part of my colleague, Senator GRASSLEY, and I to help ensure that all Americans are adequately prepared for retirement. As the ranking member of the Special Committee on Aging, I have learned that there is a critical need to educate Americans on the need to save for their retirement. Mr. President, only one-half of all American workers have pensions. A mere one-third of Americans have ever tried to calculate how much money they need for retirement. And less than one-fifth of the workforce is confident that they have saved enough to live comfortably after they retire. Having become aware of this, Senator GRASSLEY and I have introduced a piece of legislation that takes the first step in educating the public about the need to plan ahead.

Mr. President, as my colleague has just told you, our legislation will create an education project to raise public awareness about personal savings. It directs the U.S. Department of Labor to maintain an ongoing program of education and outreach to the public. The program includes public service announcements, public meetings and the distribution of educational materials. It sets up an Internet site dedicated to promoting individual retirement savings. Americans will be able to log on to the site and complete a worksheet to calculate how much they need to save to adequately supplement their projected Social Security benefits when they retire.

The SAVER bill also directs the Department of Labor to provide information to small businesses on how they